


Obituaries

Desmond Joseph Atherton



Former general practitioner Coventry, Warwickshire (b Chorley, Lancashire, 1920; q Manchester 1944; DObstRCOG), died on 9 July 2002 after a series of strokes.

After 10 years with a general practice in Coventry, he left to establish a singlehanded practice in his home. No boundary existed between his work and his after-work activities. Today he would have been considered a workaholic, but he was simply at his most relaxed when with or on call for his patients. His favourite holiday was walking, particularly in the Lake District. His daily exercise was to gather and to saw logs for his fire. There was little he did not know about logs, their expert dissection, and the qualities they would demonstrate when they burned. He leaves a wife, Hildegard; four children; and seven grandchildren. [DAVID ATHERTON] 


Mark Jensen Ballantyne

Specialist registrar in gastroenterology Southampton General Hospital, Southampton (b 1972; q Dundee 1996), d 23 June 2002.

Although only in his second year as a specialist registrar, Mark Ballantyne had already


Advice

We will be pleased to receive obituary notices of around 250 words. Pressure on space means that in most cases we will be able to publish only about 100 words in the printed journal, but we can run a fuller version on our website. We will take responsibility for shortening. We do not send proofs. Good quality, original photographs are welcome. Please give a contact telephone number and, where possible, supply the obituary on a disk or by email to obituaries@bmj.com

established himself as one of the bright stars of the future. He lived life to the full. At medical school he did an intercalated BSc. He had played golf for his county, and at university he was captain of the medical school football team and played for the university. As a senior house officer he was involved with Nottingham Amateur Premier League Football Association. [COLIN L SMITH] 

Joseph Chayen

Head of the division of cellular biology Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology 1966-90 (b 1924), died on 5 February 2002 following a severe bout of pneumonia.


Joseph Chayen will be remembered mainly as one of the principal pioneers of quantitative cytochemistry and histochemistry, and especially for his novel cytochemical bioassay of hormones. Before joining the Kennedy Institute, he was a research fellow at the Royal College of Surgeons. [SUSAN VERSTANDIG] 

John James Callender Cormack




Former general practitioner Edinburgh (b Corstorphine, Edinburgh, 1934; q Edinburgh 1959; MD, FRCPE, FRCP), d 7 July 2002.

Jack worked in general practice in Corstorphine, Edinburgh, for 37 years. After registration, he worked with the Grenfell Mission in Labrador and with the Presbyterian Church of Central Africa in Nyasaland (Malawi). He wrote his MD thesis on the GP's use of medical records. Jack coedited *Clinical Management in General Practice* and *Teaching General Practice*. In 1991 he was appointed apothecary to Her Majesty's Household at the Palace of Holyrood House. On his retirement from this position in 2001, he was personally awarded lieutenant of the

Victorian Order (LVO) by the Queen. He leaves a wife, Joy; and three children. [IAIN M M MACMILLAN] 


Kathleen Mary Laing (née Sumner)

Former community paediatrician Nottingham (b Sheffield 1929; q Royal Free Hospital, London, 1955; DCH), died from protein losing enteropathy on 24 May 2002.

Kate's love was paediatrics and in particular the care of small babies. After five years in general practice, she returned to her prime interest as a community paediatrician in the early 1970s. She enjoyed working in some of the more deprived areas and she understood the unique bond between mother and baby and the need to treat them as a single unit. Kate was known for her wonderful sense of fun and for her special enthusiasms, which included music—she played the piano beautifully. She was divorced. [EDWARD SUMNER] 

Richard Worthington Smithells

Emeritus professor of paediatrics Leeds (b 12 July 1924; q St Thomas's Hospital, London, 1948; MD, FRCP, FRCP Ed), died from prostate cancer on 13 June 2002.

Before he became professor and head of the department of paediatrics at Leeds in 1968, Dick was a lecturer in Liverpool, and consultant paediatrician and medical superintendent at Alder Hey Hospital. It was at Liverpool that he began his lifelong interest in the prevention of disease and congenital malformations, such as those associated with thalidomide. He demonstrated the importance of vitamin supplements in the prevention of spina bifida and other malformations of the spine and brain. He also demonstrated the value of rubella vaccination. Dick developed a special unit to support children damaged by thalidomide. For the rest of his life he was involved in their care and support. In particular, he played an important part in the struggle to secure compensation for them and he became a pillar of the Thalidomide Trust. He leaves a wife, Joy; five children; and 11 grandchildren. [PATRICK S BOULTER] 



Longer versions of these obituaries are available on bmj.com